Newspapers.com by Ancestry
https://www.newspapers.com/image/421619783
The Gazette (Montreal, Quebec, Canada) · Fri, Oct 31, 1975 · Page 29
Downloaded on Mar 30, 2024

Leading harpsichordist

Gilbert's recital interesting

By JACOB SISKIND
of The Gazette

Kenneth Gilbert is probably Canada's leading harpsichordist. In recent years he has been busy in Europe editing music for the harpsichord, making recordings and giving concerts.

More recently he has returned to North America for a number of concert tours and last night he was at the Pollack Concert Hall at McGill University, giving an all-Bach recital for the benefit of the Gian Lyman Memorial scholarship fund.

Today and tomorrow Gilbert gives two master classes at McGill and these have already been filled to overflowing. Last night however, the usual magic of an all-Bach program did not seem to be working. Less than half the hall was full — which is unusual in a city that usually responds to baroque music, the harpsichord and Bach in particular.

For this program Gilbert used two harpsichords — a copy of an 18th century French model on which he played most of the program, and a copy of a 17th century Italian model, which he explained he was using for the first time.

The program was a judicious mixture of the popular and the unfamiliar Bach. There were the French Suite No. 5 and the Italian Concerto — which every student encounters at some point in his progress — and there were the English Suite No. 4 and an Adagio in G major (S 968) which are less frequently heard in public.

The Adagio was something of a novelty and Gilbert, in his comments, pointed out that it was Bach's own transcription of the opening movement of the Sonata in C major for violin alone.

DIFFICULT

That Adagio is one of the most eloquent and the most difficult in the entire repertoire, largely because of its stark simplicity. The notes are so bare and unadorned that a violinist is hard put to plumb the depths the music seems to suggest.

On the basis of the transcription, however, one gets the feeling that musicians see too much in the original score, since Bach's version for harpsichord is little more than a succession of dance movements that are almost simple minded. Gilbert did little to conceal the poverty of musical invention in the score.

In the other works on the program Gilbert reminded listeners that he is a musician of unusual quality. Everything he did was interesting, even if one could not accept or agree with the ideas he projected.

Gilbert is clearly a romantic and his phrasing often recalled the rhythmic license heard from the crooners of the early swing era. It was all fascinating but not completely convincing.

There was, too, a lack of rhythmic exactitude to the playing that was often disconcerting. In some measures parts of beats were elided, in others parts of beats were added — and with no apparent design to these alterations.

They did make the performances interesting because one never knew quite when to expect what, but they were ultimately self-defeating as an attention getting device.

The diva lives again

Last year, playwright-director Jean-Claude Germain staged a play with the impossible title of Les hauts et les bas d'la vie d'une diva — and it was hailed as one of the ten best shows of the year. Now, it's back playing again at the Theatre d'Aujord'hui for a six-week run, starring the original cast of two (above), Gaston Brisson and Nicole Leblanc. The play, which opened last night, runs until Dec. 14.

Tender voice

By JUAN RODRIGUEZ
for The Gazette

Jesse Winchester is back this weekend at the Golem, a familiar spot for the singer-songwriter who has played virtually every coffee house and small club in the city since his arrival here eight years ago.

As his compositions — such as Yankee Lady, Brand New Tennessee Waltz, and Mississippi You're On My Mind — have earned him an international following, Winchester has built up steady experience on the Canadian club and concert circuit with the kind of low-key performance that's as unpredictable, in a quiet way, as it is unique.

His tones can be muted or firm declarations of faith, or simple resignation. His subtle touch comes through in a curious synthesis of both country and jazz vocal genres.

Winchester brings with him a deep understanding of the intimacy of a song, a singer and an audience, and his repertoire is wide and expansive.

There are his most well-known songs, including such characteristic assertions as Do It ("Til you're sick of it . . .") and I Can't Be Myself, as well as his grab bag of songs from country, rhythm 'n' blues and the hit parade. He'll add the odd daffy dittie into his set — such as Jesus Was A Teenager Too and Don't Smoke — injecting his own black humor. However, there's nothing foolhardy about his gospel-styled songs.

Whether on bad nights or good, Winchester conveys a closeness to his material with his tender voice and sparce guitar riffs.

Lakeshore troupe shines in anniversary production

By TOM SCURFIELD
for The Gazette

The Lakeshore Players opened their 10th anniversary season last night with a sparkling production of She Stoops to Conquer.

Written almost 200 years ago, Oliver Goldsmith's classic farce about mistaken identities, shy lovers, London fops and country bumpkins, is not an easy play to produce. If approached as a museum piece, this long, complicated play could prove to be boring.

It needs a director with an excellent sense of their period, a sure pace and skilled actors. This production scores high marks on all counts.

Jerome Tiberghien's direction is fine. He has carefully orchestrated the show, balancing lusty, rollicking scenes with quiet moments — which give the play the necessary pace, drive and vigor.

The acting is of a very high calibre, certainly better than most productions Montreal has seen so far this season. That all the actors are amateurs, with other 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. responsibilities, is hard to believe. Their level of achievement in this play tops most of the professional English productions currently around Montreal.

Paddy Cardarelli's interpretation of Tony Lumpkin, the boorish son of Mrs. Hardcastle, is excellent. His scenes with his mother, delightfully played by Pauline Rathbone, drew spontaneous rounds of applause from the capacity opening night audience.

DEMURE

Laurel Hibbert — as Kate Hardcastle — is a joy to see. She moves easily from her main role to the guise of a bar-maid and back again. Joanne Chouinard as Constance Neville is as sweet and demure as an old engraving.

Michael Minorgan as Hardcastle, John Lewis as Marlowe, and Sam LeMarquand as Hastings all gave solid performances, and the balance of the large cast are all good — with a special note of Lorne Barratt as Marlowe's drunken servant.

The set by Sheila Siegerman is also very good — giving strong support to the action. Peter de Castell's costumes are delightful, especially his creation for Mrs. Hardcastle.

This production sets a very high tone for the Lakeshore group's 10th season.

Watch For "Careers" Advertising DAILY In The Financial Section Of The Gazette

Copyright © 2024 Newspapers.com. All Rights Reserved.
Powered by Newspapers.com